

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A biopsy localization device comprising:
2 a bioabsorbable element in a pre-delivery state prior to its delivery to a soft
3 tissue biopsy site of a patient; and
4 said bioabsorbable element being of a material which is in a post-delivery
5 state at the biopsy site, the bioabsorbable element being palpably harder than the
6 surrounding soft tissue at the biopsy site when in the post-delivery state.

1 2. The device according to claim 1 further comprising a delivery
2 device for delivering the bioabsorbable element in the predelivery state to a soft tissue
3 biopsy site.

1 3. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element
2 is of a different hardness in the post-delivery state as in the pre-delivery state.

1 4. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element
2 has a hardness of at least about 1.5 times as hard as breast tissue in the post-delivery state.

1 5. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element
2 swells about 50 to 1500 percent from the pre-delivery state to the post-delivery state when
3 placed in contact with an aqueous liquid.

1 6. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element
2 has a first shape in the pre-delivery state and a second shape in the post-delivery state.

1 7. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element
2 has one consistency in the pre-delivery state and a different consistency in the post-
3 delivery state.

1 8. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element
2 has a longest dimension of at least about 0.5cm when in the post-delivery state.

1 9. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element
2 made of collagen.

1 10. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element
2 comprises a therapeutic agent.

22. A biopsy localization method comprising:

taking a tissue sample from a biopsy site within a patient;

positioning a bioabsorbable element at the biopsy site at the time of the taking of the tissue sample;

testing the tissue sample; and

if the testing indicates a need to do so relocating the biopsy site by finding the bioabsorbable element.

1 23. The method according to claim 22 wherein the positioning step is
2 carried out using said bioabsorbable element and a radiopaque marker.

1 24. The method according to claim 23 wherein the relocating step is
2 carried out using a radiographic technique.

1 25. The method according to claim 23 wherein the positioning step is
2 carried out using a chosen one of a permanent radiopaque marker and a temporary
3 radiopaque marker.

1 26. The method according to claim 22 wherein the relocating step is
2 carried out by at least one of:

3 palpation of the patient to feel the bioabsorbable element;
4 locating inflammation at the biopsy site caused by the bioabsorbable
5 element;
6 following a bioabsorbable thread, the thread extending from the patient's
7 skin to the bioabsorbable element; and
8 remotely visualizing the bioabsorbable element.

27. The method according to claim 26 wherein the remotely
visualizing step is carried out by at least a chosen one of ultrasound, MRI and
mammography.

28. The method according to claim 22 wherein the tissue sample taking
step is carried out using a needle biopsy technique.

29. The method according to claim 22 wherein the tissue sample taking
step is carried out using a surgical excisional biopsy technique.

1 30. The method according to claim 22 wherein the tissue sample taking
2 step is carried out within a soft tissue.

31. The method according to claim 22 further comprising the step of selecting the bioabsorbable element so that after positioning at the target site, the bioabsorbable element has a hardness of at least about 1.5 times as hard as the surrounding tissue.

1 32. The method according to claim 22 further comprising selecting a
2 hemostatic bioabsorbable element and providing hemostasis at the target site by the
3 hemostatic bioabsorbable element.

1 33. The method according to claim 32 wherein the hemostasis
2 providing step is provided by at least one of mechanical or chemical hemostatic
3 techniques.

1 34. The method according to claim 32 further comprising the step of
2 effectively preventing blood from contacting the hemostatic bioabsorbable element until
3 the hemostatic bioabsorbable element is positioned at the target site.

35. The method according to claim 34 wherein the effectively preventing step is carried out using a hemostatic bioabsorbable element having a non-hemostatic degradable outer layer so the hemostasis providing step is a time-delayed hemostasis providing step.

36. The method according to claim 34 wherein the effectively preventing step includes the step of physically isolating the hemostatic bioabsorbable element from contact with blood until it is at the biopsy site.

37. The method according to claim 22 wherein the bioabsorbable element positioning step is carried out by at least one of:

- injecting a flowable bioabsorbable element through a hollow member;
- pushing a nonflowable bioabsorbable element through a hollow member;
- and
- guiding a solid bioabsorbable element to the target site.

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1 47. The method according to claim 46 wherein the activating step is
2 carried out by at least one of:
3 injecting a radiation-emitting element at the vicinity of the target site;
4 externally irradiating the target site; and
5 providing a triggering substance to the agent.

1 48. The method according to claim 45 wherein the medically treating
2 step comprises delivering a therapeutic agent to the target site.

1 49. The method according to claim 48 wherein the delivering step is
2 carried out using at least one of:
3 a chemotherapy agent;
4 a radiation-emitting element;
5 thermal energy;
6 ionization energy;
7 gene therapy;
8 vector therapy;
9 electrical therapy;
10 vibrational therapy; and
11 anti-angiogenesis.

1 50. The method according to claim 45 further comprising the step of
2 relocating the biopsy by finding the bioabsorbable element.

1 51. The method according to claim 50 wherein the relocating step is
2 carried out prior to the medically treating step.

1 52. The method according to claim 51 wherein the medical treating
2 step comprises removal of tissue.